

## PART VII

## FARM MARKETING AND EXPENDITURES

Location For Marketing

Yakima County is favorably located for statewide and transcontinental marketing and is well-provided with transportation facilities. The Northern Pacific Railway traverses the entire length of the Yakima Valley and gives through service to Chicago. A branch line of the Union Pacific Railway connects with a line to Spokane at Wallula and also connects with the main line at Hinkle, Oregon for eastern points as well as for Portland. A network of branch lines brings all Yakima farms within short distance of rail haulage. Railroads provide less than a day's travel time for crops and grains to urban markets and storage terminals at Spokane, Seattle, Tacoma and Portland. Trucking facilities to the same market areas are excellent over highways U. S. 10 and state roads 410 and 5 across Cascade passes to Puget Sound cities. U. S. 97 and 10 also bring Yakima within a day's trucking time of Spokane and Portland. In freight-truck mileage, the city of Yakima is 139 miles from Tacoma, 143 miles from Seattle, 191 miles from Portland, Oregon and 218 miles from Spokane. U. S. 10 across Snoqualmie Pass to Seattle and Tacoma is the main truck route for farm products and processed foods. Improvement of highways and truck equipment has worked to the advantage of the Yakima area in marketing competition.

Income: Value of Products Sold

Census of Agriculture data on the value of farm products sold show that the trend of gross farm income has been upward in recent years. All Yakima County farms marketed \$108,679,743 worth of agricultural products in 1959 compared with \$100,593,564 in 1954 and \$55,886,315 in 1949. Gross returns to farmers almost doubled during 1949-1959. Yakima County ranked eleventh among all U. S. counties in the value of farm products sold for 1959.

The total value of all crops sold (i.e. fruits and nuts, field crops, vegetables, forest products and horticultural specialties) amounted to \$75,760,207 for Yakima County. This total was 7 percent below the corresponding figure for 1954 and represented almost 70 percent of the total value of all agricultural products sold in 1959 compared to 81 percent for 1954.

The total value of sales of livestock and poultry and their products for 1959 was \$32,919,536 or 72 percent greater than the \$19,151,930 reported in 1954. This total represents 30 percent of the value of all products sold in 1959 as compared to less than 18 percent in 1954.

Sales of farm products and farm incomes vary by type and size of farms. In 1959, more than two-thirds of the county's 6,010 farms were commercial--selling products valued at over \$2,500 per year. Low income farms making sales of under \$2,500 were considered commercial by the Census if the farm operator was under 65 years of age and he did not work off the farm 100 or more days during the year and the income received by the operator and members of his family from nonfarm sources was less than the value of all farm products sold. About 1,960 farms were noncommercial with no significant receipts for farm production. In 1959, about 13 percent of all commercial farms in the county were in Economic Class I, with sales of \$40,000 or more for the year. Over 16 percent of the farms were in the class that

receive between \$20,000 and up to \$39,999 per year. About one-fourth of the commercial farms made sales that varied between \$10,000 and \$19,999. Another fourth were in the class that receive between \$5,000 and up to \$9,999 per year. Over 16 percent of the farms ranged in value of products sold from \$2,500 to \$4,999 for the year of 1959. Low income commercial farms that take in less than \$2,500 but more than \$50 per year were not common, numbering only 181 or less than 5 percent of all commercial farms.

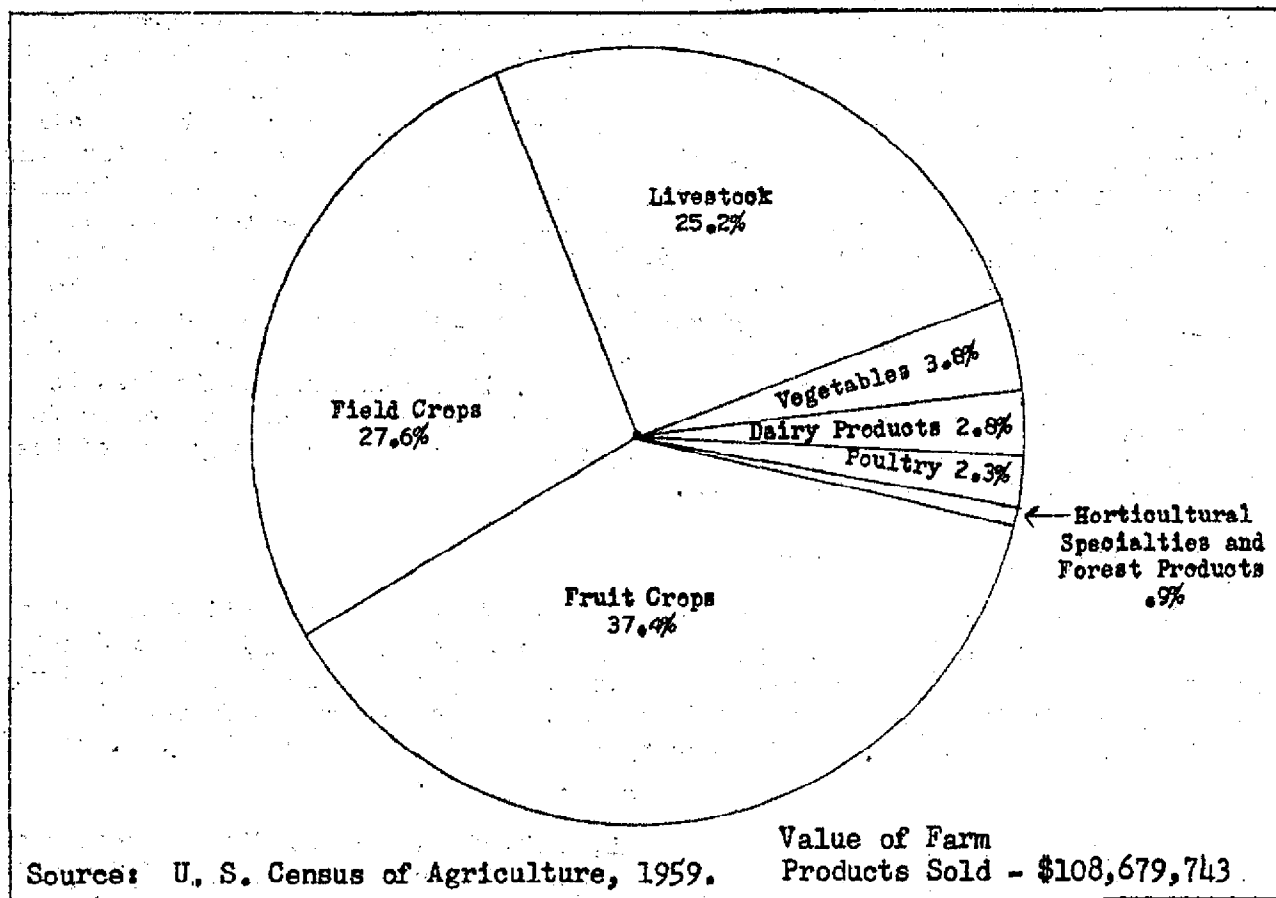


Figure 14. Sources of Cash Income, Yakima County, 1959

Table 41. Crops Marketed From Yakima County Farms, 1959.

Crops Marketed	Amount Received By Farmers (Dollars)	Percent All Crops Sold
Fruits (tree fruits, grapes, berries)	\$40,612,342	53.6
Field Crops (wheat, barley, field corn, alfalfa, potatoes, hops, sugar beets and other)	29,988,037	39.6
Vegetables (asparagus, sweet corn, green peas, etc.)	4,163,611	5.5
Forest Products and Horticultural Specialties	996,217	1.3
Total amount received by farmers for cash crops	\$75,760,207	100.0

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.

### Marketing Fruit, Grapes and Berries

The major farm product marketing activity in Yakima County is the buying, grading, packing, processing and shipping of the area's heavy tree fruit production. Sales from orchards and vineyards were valued at over \$40,600,000 in 1959, making up 37 percent of the county's farm economy and accounting for over one-half of all crops marketed. In 1959, harvested and marketable fruit production of Yakima County recorded by the Census included 15,574,316 loose boxes of apples, 36,589 tons of peaches, 61,062 tons of pears, 15,213 tons of prunes, 7,058 tons of apricots, 8,091 tons of cherries and 30,084 tons of grapes.

The City of Yakima is an important center of fruit marketing agencies. Numerous packing plants, refrigerated warehouses and related facilities along "produce row" plainly show the importance of marketing fruit crops. In addition, several new fruit packing and storage plants have been constructed in the last five years in the Yakima Valley, outside of Yakima.

Processors provide a major outlet for many Yakima County fruits, but a large share of it is moved to fresh market. Most of the apple crop moves to fresh market in a normal year, however, apple processors take many which fail to meet shipping standards. Apples are processed in the form of dried slices, juice, apple-sauce and are used in wine, jams, jellies and vinegar. Most of the Bartlett pears are canned, while nearly all of the winter pear crop is sold fresh. Sweet cherries have two major processing outlets which are canning and brining. Peaches and apricots go both for processing and fresh market. Cannery take most of the peaches and apricots used by processors. Of Yakima's total grape production, over 95 percent is crushed for wine and juice. Blackcaps are shipped to processors in the East, Southwest for use in preserves, pie fillings and soft drink flavoring. Practically all of the currants are sold to processors and made into jellies, preserves and wine.

Two kinds of local selling are important—one is the roadside market plan and there are some U-pick operations. Fruit stands or roadside market operations are numerous and familiar sights along the highways during the fruit harvest season.

The principal outlet for Yakima's fruit is the domestic market, although foreign trade is an important outlet, too. Apples and pears are marketed fresh in Canada and western Europe. Other fruit crops are exported primarily in processed form.

### Marketing Field Crops

The second largest agricultural marketing activity is the handling, packaging and shipping of the irrigated and dryland field crops, which accounted for over one-fourth of the value of all farm products sold in the county for 1959. Total sales amounted to \$29,988,037 placing Yakima second among Washington counties in sales of field crops. About 40 percent of all crop marketings in the county are field crops.

Marketings of field crops, corn, wheat, barley, oats, rye and other grains, involved transferring over 3,400,000 bushels of grain in 1959 from growers to dealers, millers, feeders and marketing cooperatives. Corn harvested for grain is the predominant crop with about 1,962,739 bushels sold off farms in 1959. Wheat sales were 962,796 bushels. Barley is the third most important grain crop

### Marketing Commercial Vegetables and Potatoes

Vegetables for processing and fresh market grown in Yakima County were valued at \$4,163,611 in 1959, making up 3.8 percent of the value of all farm products sold and accounted for 5.5 percent of all crops marketed. Asparagus, the most valuable vegetable crop, moves to market in three forms--fresh, canned and frozen. Normally, one-fourth of the crop is sold on the fresh market, the balance going to canning and freezing plants. The Washington Asparagus Growers' Association serves as a bargaining agent for most of the growers. The crop reaches many markets in the Midwest, New York, Boston and Canada.

Sweet corn is another of Yakima's most valuable vegetable crops and is exceeded in value only by asparagus. Most of the sweet corn goes to processors for canning and freezing. Other important vegetables being grown include green peas, cantaloup, rutabagas and turnips, watermelons, tomatoes, onions, carrots, snap beans, cucumbers and lettuce. Most of these vegetables are harvested for both the fresh market and for processing.

Potatoes also are important in marketing. In 1962, about 36,600 tons were harvested for sale. Potatoes find a ready market in the Midwest, South, East and along the West Coast. The late summer crop is dug and marketed immediately, whereas most of the fall crop goes into storage for winter marketing. Processing is now a major market outlet with potato chips, French fries and other processed forms making use of the raw product. At least three firms that process potatoes are now located in the Yakima Valley.

### Marketing Horticultural Specialties

The total value of sales for all horticultural specialties for Yakima County was \$955,792 in 1959. This was about one-third more than the \$728,404 reported in 1954. For 1959, the value of sales represented less than 1 percent of the total value of farm products sold and accounted for only about 1.3 percent of all crops marketed.

Nursery products, such as trees, shrubs, vines and ornamentals, accounted for \$721,642 or about 75 percent of the sales of all horticultural specialties in 1959. Cut flowers, flowering and foliage plants, bedding plants and cultivated florist greens accounted for 15 percent of the total, while sales of bulbs, flower seeds, greenhouse vegetables amounted to approximately 10 percent of the value of all horticultural specialty crops. There were 65 farms reporting horticultural specialty crops in the 1959 Census of Agriculture. Twenty-five farms reported sales of \$2,000 or more of horticultural crops.

### Marketing Forest Products

In recent years, farm forest products have become more important in agricultural marketing. During 1959, the Census showed that about 23 Yakima County farms were selling sawlogs, poles, fence posts and other woodland products. Farm woodland owners sold products worth \$40,425 in 1959. This was about three times greater than the \$13,631 reported in 1954. The value represented only a small percentage of the total value of all farm products sold and crops marketed.

Sales of standing timber accounted for \$20,544 or 51 percent of the value of all forest products. Major items such as firewood, pulpwood, fence posts, sawlogs

and Christmas trees accounted for the balance. Markets for these forest products exist in the numerous orchards and in the treeless country of the Columbia Basin. Demands for boxes and packaging material related to the fruit industry resulted in several box-shook mills being built in the county. Woodland farmers are able to market forest products quite easily by the use of modern trucks.

Table 42. Livestock and Livestock Products Marketed  
Yakima County, 1959

Class of Livestock and Products Sold	Amount Received By Farmers (dollars)	Percent of the Total Value
Livestock Sold Alive (cattle and calves, horses and mules, hogs, sheep)	\$27,369,237	83.1
Dairy Products (whole milk, butterfat)	3,026,388	9.2
Poultry and Poultry Products (chickens, eggs, turkeys, ducks, etc.)	<u>2,523,911</u>	<u>7.7</u>
Total amount received for Livestock and Livestock Products	\$32,919,536	100.0

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.

#### Marketing Livestock: Cattle, Sheep and Hogs

The third largest agricultural marketing activity, after fruit and field crops, is the sale of livestock and livestock products involving meat packers, feed yards and breeders. This accounted for 25 percent of the value of all farm products sold in Yakima County for 1959. Total sales amounted of \$27,369,237, placing Yakima first among Washington counties in livestock and livestock products sold, other than poultry and dairy. About 83 percent of all livestock marketings are made up of this kind of sales activity.

Cattle and calves are the major livestock items marketed. The value of sales of cattle and calves for 1959, \$25,280,161, was over twice the \$11,871,155 reported in 1954. The 1959 total represents 23 percent of the county's farm economy as compared with 12 percent for 1954. About 95,887 head of cattle worth \$23,199,320 were marketed as slaughter cattle. Calves for feeders and stockers numbered 17,925 with a sale value of \$2,080,841. The majority of the slaughter heifers and steers are sold direct to packers or local dealers, with only a small percentage being sold through auctions and terminal markets. Slaughter cows, however, are primarily sold at the auctions. Most of the feeder cattle are sold direct to packing plants; the remainder are sold through auctions. Feeder calves are marketed directly to local processors or through auctions, with only a small percentage being sold through terminal markets.

Sheep produce two sources of income per year: meat and wool. For 1959, the value of sheep and lambs sold was \$1,282,151, or about 7 percent below the \$1,375,016 for 1954. Over 98,600 head were sold as slaughter lambs, breeding stock and feeders. Yakima County sheepmen also sold 621,290 pounds of wool. Many

sheepmen sell their animals through the Yakima Valley Sheep Marketing Association. The association holds several scheduled sales a year, where buyers from Spokane, Yakima, Portland and other Oregon points bid for lambs. A large number of sheep sold through the association are shipped to Ellensburg for slaughter. Varying numbers are shipped to California.

The 1959 value of hogs and pigs sold alive was \$492,591. This was 6 percent below the \$522,531 of sales for 1954. The number of hogs and pigs sold, 14,927, includes those sold for further growth and fattening as well as the number of hogs sold for slaughter. A declining demand for lard has led to the development and marketing of a lean, meat-type hog. Sales direct to dealers account for most of the meat-type hogs marketed. Special feeder pig sales are held throughout the year at various places. The majority of hogs and pigs marketed in the county are shipped to a packing plant at Yakima for slaughter and processing.

Organizations, services and facilities for the marketing of livestock and livestock products are well-developed within and adjacent to Yakima County. There are three state-inspected slaughter plants in the county located at Yakima, Wapato and Grandview. There also are two federal-inspected plants which serve the wholesale and retail meat trade in Yakima County. They are located at Yakima and at Toppenish. Although there are numerous buyers of livestock and livestock products who buy direct from the farmers, more and more livestockmen in recent years have been using community livestock auction yards. Livestock are hauled to sales yards at Wapato and Toppenish for weekly auctions and here the buyers bid competitively. Slaughter and feeder cattle, sheep, hogs, horses and breeding stock are sold at these yards.

#### Marketing Dairy Products

The total value of dairy products (milk and cream) sold was \$3,026,388 for 1959, or 8 percent below the \$3,281,913 reported for all dairy products sold for 1954. Sales of milk and cream in 1959 represented 9 percent of the total value of all livestock and their products sold, and 3 percent of the value of all farm products sold.

Dairy products are sold mainly within the county area for local processing and consumption. In 1959, there were 817 milk producing farms in Yakima County which shipped 69,216,289 pounds of whole milk and 229,015 pounds of cream. Manufacturing plants continue to be the main market for milk. Farm milk and cream are channelled through the Central Washington Dairymen's Association plant at Yakima, which processes and distributes a variety of dairy products. Other private distributing and manufacturing plants which buy fluid milk and cream include one plant at Yakima and two at Sunnyside.

#### Marketing Poultry and Eggs

The total value of poultry and eggs sold was \$2,523,911 for 1959, or 42 percent above the \$1,778,260 reported for 1954. Sales of poultry products in 1959 represented 8 percent of the total value for all livestock and their products sold, and 2 percent of the value of all farm products sold. Poultrymen have expanded their markets in recent years in the immediate area of the Yakima Valley and the Tri-cities. Over 740 poultry producers sold chickens, eggs and turkeys during 1959.

Marketing fresh eggs is the major activity. In 1959, about 2,873,396 dozen eggs were sold, or 79 percent above the 1,603,333 dozen reported for 1954. Nearly all of the eggs go through local channels for fresh market--cooperatives, cash dealers or grocery stores. A major channel is through the Western Farmers Association, which operates a processing plant in Sunnyside and numerous stations throughout the county. The cooperative maintains a fleet of trucks for collection and distribution.

Marketing live chickens and broilers represents the second most important activity. The number of chickens sold in 1959 totaled 1,204,429, or about 4 times greater than the 299,829 reported for 1954. Broilers comprised 88 percent of the number of all chickens sold in 1959, compared to 64 percent in 1954. Private and cooperative processing plants equipped with efficient facilities for handling large numbers of birds, constitute the major sales outlet for broiler growers.

Turkeys, ducks, geese and other miscellaneous poultry also are important economic contributors to the county, returning \$799,464 to farmers in 1959. These sales represented 32 percent of the total value of all poultry sold. With over 163,500 turkeys raised for market, Yakima County is a surplus area in turkeys and distant markets are sought to consume its production.

#### Specified Farm Expenditures

Expenditures connected with operating a farm greatly reduce the net income a farmer receives as profits from sales of crops and livestock. Yakima County farmers who reported expenditures in 1959 spent about \$52,079,752 for labor, equipment and supplies which represented about 48 percent of the value of all farm products sold in 1959. Hired labor used in tree fruit, commercial vegetable and specialty crop farming was the major cost. Over 4,200 farms hired labor, paying out \$18,328,842 in wages for seasonal and full-time hired help in the 1959 crop year. The second largest expense was for the purchase of livestock and poultry.

Table 43. Specified Farm Expenditures in 1959  
Yakima County

Type of Expenditure	Number of Farms Reporting	Expenditure of All Farms	Average Per Farm
Feed for livestock and poultry	2,990	\$ 9,504,620	\$3,179
Purchase of livestock and poultry	2,149	16,193,710	7,534
Machine hire	3,497	3,337,916	955
Hired labor	4,226	18,328,842	4,314
Gasoline, petroleum fuel and oil	5,946	3,569,989	600
Seeds, bulbs, plants and trees	2,703	1,144,675	423
Total expended		\$52,079,752	

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.

Expenditures amounted to \$16,193,710, averaging \$7,534 per farm. The purchase of feed for livestock and poultry ranked as the third major expense, costing \$9,504,620 and averaging \$3,179 per farm. Purchases of gasoline and oil for use in tractors, trucks and combines cost over \$3,569,989. A fifth major cost was for machine hire, referring to custom farm work such as tractor hire, combining,

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plowing, spraying, fruit picking, etc. Nearly 3,500 farms averaged about \$955 each for machine hire and expended \$3,337,916 for this item. Expenditures for seeds, bulbs, plants and trees were the smallest, amounting to \$1,144,675. The six items for farm expense averaged almost \$8,721 per farm for all farms. Compared with 1954, costs for essential farm labor and supplies enumerated by the Census were much greater in 1959. Servicing and supplying the farms is an important basis of employment and local business for the cities and communities of Yakima County.

### Fertilizer and Lime

Fertilizer was used on nearly six out of ten farms in 1959. In Yakima County 31,716 tons of fertilizer were purchased for use on 3,528 farms. Of all fertilizer used in 1959, 22,724 tons were dry materials and 8,992 tons were liquid materials.

More fertilizer is used on sugar beets than on any other crop. In 1959, sugar beets accounted for 16 percent of all fertilizer used and for 10 percent of the acreage fertilized. Hay and cropland pasture ranked second with 14,202 acres fertilized. Wheat, barley and other pasture followed, in that order.

In 1959, only six farms reported the use of lime and liming materials. About 220 tons of lime were used on 124 acres in that year.

Table 44. Use of Commercial Fertilizer On Crops and Pasture  
Yakima County, 1959

Crops and Pasture Fertilized	Farms Reporting Use of Fertilizer	Acres Fertilized		Tons Used	
		Total (Acres)	Percent of Acreage Fertilized	Total (Tons)	Pounds Per Acre
Total Commercial Fertilizer Used	3,528	159,688	100.0	31,716	10,000
Hay and Cropland Pasture	635	14,202	8.9	1,522	18,600
Other Pasture	243	2,886	1.8	405	14,200
Wheat	295	11,030	6.9	990	22,200
Barley	124	3,577	2.2	302	23,600
Sugar Beets	406	15,367	9.6	5,004	6,200
All Other Crops	3,085	112,626	70.6	23,593	9,600

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture, 1959.